

Interior designer Sally Williams used custom cove lighting, as seen here in the dining room, to enhance the light and airy feeling the owners were seeking. Two sets of french doors as well as a clear pillow-shaped glass pendant above the eating table add to the light and open vibe. Dining room walls are painted Dorian Gray by Sherwin Williams.





# URBAN LIVING AT ITS BEST *in Raleigh's Five Points*

By Elizabeth Lincicome  
Photography by Smith Hardy

**W**hen a couple of empty-nesters with an adorable dog were looking to simplify and downsize, they found exactly what they were looking for in a new construction condominium project set to be built in Raleigh's hip, yet well-established, Five Points neighborhood.

Originally from Europe, the couple has lived in Raleigh for years, having raised and educated their children here. Lucky for them, they caught wind of the new development early on and reserved a unit in the recently completed Fairview Row. This series of new condos, which overlooks the well-trafficked Fairview Road, was exactly what the pair was looking for in their next phase of life. "They liked the downtown feel but without all the hassles of living completely downtown," says principal designer Sally Williams, owner of the Raleigh-based Colorful Concepts Interior Design.

The couple chose their unit before construction got underway, enabling them to first meet Sally with a set of floor plans in tow. This allowed them to customize the interior design and open up the space by widening doorways and heightening baseboards.



Williams also designed and added cove lighting and omitted aprons below the windowsills to create a sleeker look. The result is a European Contemporary-style masterwork.

The home is 1,800-square-foot and takes up one-half of one floor in the development, which is comprised of a series of three, three-story buildings. “This condo shows like a home but requires no outdoor upkeep, which is exactly what they wanted,” Williams says. “The two-bed, two-and-a-half bath unit includes a home office, laundry room, spacious formal entrance hall, and outdoor balcony overlooking a picturesque streetscape.

When it comes to designing a client’s home, William’s philosophy is to put her personal taste aside and give her clients exactly what they want. She has experience working in both modern and traditional spaces and says that because living environments have such an impact on people’s day-to-day lives, she works to really understand their needs. For this couple in particular, an open, sleek living space was tantamount; however, the unit’s original floor plan called for a column in the middle of the living area that had to remain for structural purposes. Williams got creative by widening the column and creating an actual wall to showcase art.



*Top:* A pair of matching sofas in the living room flanks a Criss Cross coffee table and provides the perfect seating area to cozy up to in front of the ribbon fireplace. The hand knotted rug is Stark and walls are painted in Sherwin Williams Repose Gray. Living room art includes the Soft Evening Commission by Natalie George via Bev’s Fine Art, and a 46” Rolling Karg Glass Sculpture made in phosphate white and purple  
*Bottom:* A pair of Edie Baluster sconces in polished nickel flank a custom-sized ebony and silver leaf sideboard. A panel mirror above the table provides even more depth and openness to the space. The hallway walls are painted Repose Gray by Sherwin Williams.



The home's modern and sleek aesthetic is enhanced by the geometric print wallpaper in the entry foyer by Wynfield Thybony as well as the use of carefully chosen art like the white sculptural piece by artist Mary Hong.



The home's open kitchen includes white marble countertops and white cabinets throughout. The island doubles as an eating bar thanks to a pair of faux suede Chicago Counter Stools. Williams added modern pendant lights above the bar to enhance the light airy feeling, and the walls are painted in Sherwin Williams Gauntlet Gray. Kitchen amenities include stainless steel Wolf appliances and a Sub-Zero undercounter wine storage unit.



The pantry is concealed by a sliding barn door with an image of a city streetscape imprinted on it. Williams notes this was perhaps the most time consuming element of the design process for the homeowners, choosing just the right image to adorn the pantry barn door.



A wall of floor to ceiling french doors allow natural light to flood into the master bedroom. The sleek ripple-fold drapes as well as a set of roman shades on either side of the king bed provide privacy when needed. A crystal ten-light chandelier hangs above the bed giving the room a luxurious feel. Bedroom walls are painted Dorian Gray by Sherwin Williams. The Stanhope Edge Rug is by Stark.





The color scheme is a contrast of dark and light tones where a tasteful mix of grays and neutrals lets the couple's art collection steal the show. "This adds so much interest to the space," Williams says. The front foyer and entrance hall incorporate geometric features on the wallpaper, area rug, a quilted leather chair and square pendant lighting. The stunning sight line down the front hallway looks to the couple's master bedroom suite. The modern L-shaped kitchen is where you will find the most unique feature of the home: a glass barn door with a colorful urban graphic used to hide the built-in pantry. Williams says the pantry was originally supposed to have french doors, but they didn't fit with the style of the home so she came up with the idea of the barn door. "In fact, the biggest time commitment on my clients' part went into finding that perfect image for the pantry door," she adds.

The sliding barn door is the perfect accessory to the open-concept kitchen. The room is modern, light, and airy with stainless steel appliances, white shaker cabinets, a white marble backsplash, white countertops

and a host of lighting alternatives. A large window above an undermount sink allows natural light to flood in. Gray veining in the countertops and backsplash tie in with the dark gray walls.

In both the dining and living rooms, large floor-to-ceiling french doors with transom windows allow natural light to flood in and provide great views of the Five Points community below. The dining room features a clear, textured glass light fixture above a dark wood dining table, which matches the home's dark hardwood floors. A wall-mounted flat screen TV in the living



One of Williams' signature lighting enhancements includes a six-light polished stainless steel chandelier, which hangs above the Barcelona freestanding tub. Other amenities include a heated towel bar, frameless shower and 24" x 24" straight pattern floor tile in all areas other than the shower.

room hangs over a ribbon fireplace, accented with an assortment of small stones.

Like the entry hall and dining room, Williams applied the same warm touches to the master bedroom by using cove and recessed lighting. She also extended the ceiling plate and added curved crown moulding to further enhance the sleek, modern feel.

Beyond anything else, this condominium proves that with the right mix of interior design, lighting and structural details, even a small urban living space can truly become open and inviting. ♦